

COPS Underage Drinking Conference Calls

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- I. Connections between underage drinking and victimization
 - A. Victimization leading to substance abuse (generally via depression or anxiety)
 - B. Drinking increases vulnerability to victimization
 - C. Drinking can increase aggressive behavior
- II. Responses need to take these factors into account
 - A. Screening for trauma history
 - B. Educating potential victims
 - C. Responding to victims as victims, not offenders
 - D. Addressing substance abuse in violent offenders
- III. Obstacles to victims getting help
 - A. Victim blaming
 - B. Fear of punishment
 - C. Fear of retaliation
 - D. Consider non-punishment policies for sexual assault victims who have been drinking underage
- IV. Effects of alcohol and date rape drugs on memory/reporting/prosecution
 - A. Victim's perspective: waking up and realizing . . .
 - B. What victims should do
 - C. Time is of the essence
 - D. Forensic evidence vs. victim's word: character assassination in the courts
 - E. The nature of traumatic memory absent any altering substances
- V. The good news: youth leadership
 - A. Experimentation is common but regular heavy drinking is not
 - B. Effectiveness of positive peer influence
 - C. The National Center's youth-led models
 - D. Inclusive definition of "youth leader"

References:

Clark, DB, Lesnick, L & Hegedus, AM (1997). Traumas and other adverse life events in adolescents with alcohol abuse and dependence. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry* 36 (12): 1744-51.

National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center (2002). Facts for Teens: Teens and Alcohol. Accessed via the web at <http://www.safeyouth.org/scripts/teens/docs/alcohol.pdf>.

Wordes, M. & Nunez, M. (2002). *Our Vulnerable Teenagers: Their Victimization, Its Consequences, and Directions for Prevention and Intervention*. Washington, DC: National Council on Crime and Delinquency and National Center for Victims of Crime